

mm), the estimated length from the tip of the snout to the vent (SV) was c. 550 mm. The following diagnostic features were visible in the photograph: ventral profile scalloped and sharply constricted behind the vent; mouth small and terminal; no anal fin; paired pectoral and pelvic fins present (Palmer, 1986).

Although the scalloped ribbonfish is rarely recorded, particularly in commercial trawls, it is generally considered to be mesopelagic (0 – 800 m) with a circumglobal distribution in tropical and temperate waters, including: Madeira, Azores and Mediterranean Sea (N.E. Atlantic); Gulf of Mexico, Cuba, Florida, Bermuda and Canada (N.W. Atlantic); South Africa (S.E. Atlantic); Kenya (Indian Ocean); Japan, Philippines and New Zealand (Indo-Pacific); California, Peru and Galapagos Islands (E. Pacific) (Palmer, 1961; Heemstra & Kannemeyer, 1984; Robins *et al.*, 1986; Bianco *et al.*, 2006; [www.fishbase.org](http://www.fishbase.org)). Despite being previously recorded on several occasions in the N.W. Atlantic from the Gulf of Mexico northwards to Sable Island, Canada (44° N, 63° W), it has rarely been recorded from the N.E. Atlantic and only as far north as the Azores (38.98° N, 31.37° W) ([www.fishbase.org](http://www.fishbase.org)).

In the Mediterranean Sea adult and juvenile specimens (< 1219 mm total length  $L_T$ ), as well as larvae and ova, have previously been recorded, albeit sporadically. Large specimens (> 800 mm  $L_T$ ) have been caught mainly during summer months at depths ranging from 150 to 800 m, while juveniles have occasionally been observed free swimming in shallow coastal waters. The species is thought to spawn between May and August in the Strait of Messina (Bianco *et al.*, 2006; Psomadakis *et al.*, 2007; Bradai & El Ouaer, 2012).



**Fig. 1.** Scalloped ribbonfish *Zu cristatus* captured east of the Rockall Bank on 8 September 2001.

The specimen described here represents the first record of the scalloped ribbonfish from N.W. European waters, and extends the species range by c. 2311 km in the N.E. Atlantic. Although possible that this specimen was carried across from the N.W. Atlantic *via* the North Atlantic Drift, it is also possible the species may occur more widely in the N.E. Atlantic yet remains undetected. Tortonese (1958) suggested that the species was rarely

captured because mesopelagic habitats are poorly sampled.

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## Insect and spider records from Islay in 2011 (Arachnida, Coleoptera, Hemiptera and Hymenoptera)

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This note presents records of insects and a spider from Islay, Inner Hebrides, collected while on a visit to the island in July 2011. The visit lasted a week and coincided with some of the best weather of that indifferent summer, and fieldwork was not hindered by wind or rain. Collecting effort concentrated on aquatic and semi-aquatic invertebrate species, with several collected species apparently new to the island according to published sources and maps on the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) ([www.nbn.org.uk](http://www.nbn.org.uk)). Voucher material for these records have been deposited with the Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow (Entry No. 1392).

The visit was primarily to carry out an entomological assessment of two RSPB reserves: Smaull Farm and the Oa. Smaull Farm on the north-west coast contains areas of wet heath and modified bog, coastal grassland and arable ground and includes part of Loch Corr. This lake is known for its entomological interest, in particular species of water beetle. The coastal strip west of Loch Corr is drained by several short streams that flow into the Atlantic. The most interesting of these streams flows along Gleann na Muchdalaich, a short glen with interesting habitat, including an area of sedge and moss-dominated mire at Dun Bheolain. The Oa is an elevated coastal site at the south-east of the island with heath and blanket bog containing several lakes, including Loch Kinnabus, one of the largest lakes on the island. Visits were made to several other localities, including Loch Gruinart, which is a large sea loch on the northern side of the island, and Ardnave Loch, a shallow lake behind dunes.

#### Arachnida, Araneae

*Argyroneta aquatica*: Loch Corr, NR225695, 24 July 2011. No previous records have been mapped for Islay or any other Scottish island (Harvey *et al.*, 2002). It is present on Rathlin Island, Co Antrim, the nearest Irish island to the south (*pers. obs.*).

#### Coleoptera

*Stenus cicindeloides*: Dun Bheolain, NR213688, 29 July 2011. Found on mossy fen, swept from sedges and rushes. A widespread species (Lott & Anderson, 2011) but few Scottish mainland records are shown on the NBN and none from any of the other Scottish islands.

*Stenus oscillator*: Dun Bheolain, NR213688, 29 July 2011. Found on mossy mire/poor fen, taken with pond net. This is a rare northern species of acid mires, wet heaths and bogs (Boyce, 2004; Lott & Anderson, 2011). This appears to be the first record from Islay and the habitat would appear typical for the species. Only two mainland Scottish records are shown on the NBN. One male was dissected to confirm the identification.

#### Hemiptera

*Hebrus ruficeps*: Loch Corr, NR224694, 24 July 2011. Common on wet mosses in wet heath/poor fen by lake. Dun Bheolain, NR213688, 29 July 2011. Common on wet mosses in sedge and moss-rich mire in small glen. The habitat at both sites is typical of where it occurs in Ireland (*pers. obs.*). There are only a few Scottish mainland records and none from the islands (Huxley, 2003).

*Corixa punctata*: Smaull RSPB reserve, NR214674, 29 July 2011. Adults common on shallow artificial wetland; two males dissected. The distribution of *C. punctata* and the very similar *C. iberica* in Scotland are discussed and shown in Huxley (1997, 2003) and Angus (2006a, b). Huxley (1997) reported *C. iberica* on Islay and considered that old records of *C. punctata* from the island were likely to be *C. iberica*, so only that species was mapped on the atlas (Huxley, 2003). The 2011 *C. punctata* specimens from Islay may represent a recent colonisation. A similar situation has been noted on the north coast of Northern Ireland where *C. punctata* has appeared on sites on Rathlin Island that held *C. iberica* in the 1980s (Nelson, 1995; *pers. obs.*).

*Micronecta poweri*: Loch Kinnabus, NR301426, 25 July 2011. Adult found in shallow water on stony margins of lake. Typical habitat for the species but unaccountably only a single adult was caught. In the author's experience the species is normally present in numbers in suitable habitats. Dolling (1983) mentions the occurrence of *M. minutissima* on Islay, but this is likely to be incorrect. *Micronecta poweri* was formerly known as *M. minutissima* and old records under that name probably refer to this species. True *M. minutissima* is confined in Britain to south-east England (Huxley, 2003). Huxley (1997) lists both *M. poweri* and *M. minutissima* from Islay but indicates the *M. minutissima* record as probably incorrect. However, neither species was shown as occurring on Islay in Huxley (2003). This record at least provides confirmation of its presence on Islay.

*Chartoscirta cincta*: Dun Bheolain, NR213688, 29 July 2011. Adults swept from sedge beds.

*Salda littoralis*: Loch Gruinart, east shore near Killinallan, NR303714, 28 July 2011. A single adult collected on upper beach of sea loch with patchy saltmarsh.

*Saldula palustris*: Loch Gruinart, east shore near Killinallan, NR303714, 28 July 2011. Adults common on upper beach of sea loch with patchy saltmarsh.

*Saldula saltatoria*: Loch Kinnabus, NR301426, 25 July 2011. Many collected on exposed stony shore of lake. Ardnave Loch, NR286728, 28 July 2011. Common on bare ground on shore of lake. Loch



Gruinart, east shore near Killinallan, NR303714, 28 July 2011. Adults common on upper beach of sea loch with patchy saltmarsh.

No records of saldid bugs from Islay are shown on the NBN maps. *Saldia littoralis* and *Saldula saltatoria* are the commonest species in their respective genera and their presence on Islay is not unexpected. On the basis of comments in Dolling (1983), it appears that *Chartoscirta cincta* and *Saldula palustris* are new to the Islay fauna.

### Hymenoptera

*Bombus pratorum*: Kinnabus, NR298426, 25 July 2011. A single male collected in flowery meadow. This common bumblebee has apparently not been recorded from Islay before, although there is a record from the neighbouring island of Jura.

My work on Islay was funded by the RSPB. Thanks are due to Mark Gurney (RSPB) and Garth Foster for information on the island and to Malcolm Ogilvie, Becky Williamson and Ian Brooke for advice and hospitality during my visit.

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## Continuing decline of the grey squirrel population on Loch Lomondside

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An increasing scarcity of the hitherto well established North American grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* in the woodlands of east Loch Lomondside first drew my attention during the late 1990s. The suspected cause of this decline is potentially the result of population expansion into the area by predatory pine marten *Martes martes* (Mitchell, 2001). That pine marten are capable of successfully pursuing grey squirrel through the tree canopy to affect a kill was witnessed by a gamekeeper on the Buchanan Castle Estate in early April 2004 (Mitchell, 2005). Further observations in the same area showed that by the beginning of 2012 the grey squirrel, once familiar at bird feeding tables, was no longer observed in gardens in the village of Drymen. Additionally, there were several sightings of pine martens in this area during the previous months.

Less information is available regarding any change in the population status of grey squirrels elsewhere on Loch Lomondside. An exception to this is the ever popular Balloch Park, situated on the loch's southern basin, where grey squirrels have always been relatively easy to observe. During the course of a short walk, a dozen or more individuals could until recently be seen foraging on the grass lawns. By the spring of 2012, however, a visitor to the park would have been lucky to come across more than one or two grey squirrels.

Several factors may be involved in the Balloch Park grey squirrels' fall in numbers; one being disturbance from tree-felling that had taken place in order to contain an outbreak of a conifer disease. Secondly, there were unverified reports of the systematic culling of nuisance grey squirrels by local residents whose gardens adjoin the park (Lewis Pate, *pers. comm.*). Finally, there remains the possibility of predation by pine martens within Balloch Park. Their presence within this park was confirmed in September 2010 when a single pine marten was live-trapped and released at an adjacent farm (*Lennox Herald* 1/10/2010).